

ANIMAL HOSPITAL OF LANESVILLE

1849 Highway 11 Lanesville, IN 47136 (812) 952-3643

Bathing Your Pet

By Dr. Rene Wingerter

If you are bathing your pet because he is scratching or has an offensive odor, it would be best to have your pet checked by the veterinarian first. Often the odor may be coming from infected ears, teeth, skin or anal glands. Sometimes the pet has fleas, mange or allergies that need special medications or shampoos.

The first step to bathing your pet is to get everything ready and in reach, such as pet shampoo, cream rinses, dip and plenty of towels. If your pet has mange mites, mix up the special dip in a plastic gallon jug according to the directions first. It is best for you to wear rubber gloves and a plastic apron when using these special prescription dips and bathe your pet in a well-ventilated area. Be sure to use dog and cat shampoo when bathing your pet, not human shampoo as this may remove the oils from your pet's skin causing him to itch or have dandruff.

Next you will need to give him a complete exam. Be sure to comb the hair all the way to the skin. Check areas like armpits and behind the ears and back legs for small mats. Wet mats actually become tighter and impossible to remove. Try brushing in a little cornstarch to get out stubborn mats. If your pet is completely matted, bring him to a groomer for a clip.

Next examine your pet's ears and pluck out any excessive hair and clean them. You can use a 50:50 solution of vinegar and water. This is also a good time to trim toenails and brush the teeth.

With the pet in the bathtub, use a spray hose attachment or a large cup to wet the pet down from head to toe and shampoo the entire body. Be sure to include the face, ears, feet and hind end. The face is actually the most important place to wash for odor control. If you are worried about getting shampoo in the pet's eyes, use one that is safe to get in the eye and flush any shampoo out of the pet's eyes completely.

When rinsing be sure to use cool water, not hot, because hot water may make your pet's skin red and irritated. If your pet is very dirty, it is best to rinse and repeat the shampooing. For longhaired pets, add a cream rinse before the final rinse.

Once all soap is rinsed out, plug up the tub and pour on the dip. Use a sponge to apply the dip to the face, stomach and legs and let your pet stand or lay in the dip for at least 5 minutes. Do not rinse the dip off.

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Wring out the excess moisture and use a towel to dry the pet. Be sure to put him some place warm or use a blow dryer (on low so you don't cook your pet) to get him completely dry before he is allowed to go outside.

If your pet has a flea problem, we recommend using Frontline or other prescription flea products. They work much better than the grocery store brands.

If you have more questions, need to purchase flea control or think your pet may have mange, please call us for more information at the Animal Hospital of Lanesville at 952-3643. 🐾